



Teachers' Perception towards Competency-Based Curriculum: A Study at the Secondary Level

Raihana Akter

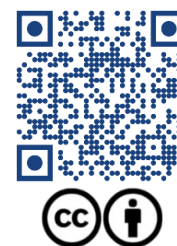
Associate Professor, Department of English Language and Literature, Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University, Trishal, Mymensingh, Bangladesh

Received: 23 Mar 2026; Received in revised form: 20 Apr 2026; Accepted: 24 Apr 2026; Available online: 28 Apr 2026

©2026 The Author(s). Published by Infogain Publication. This is an open-access article under the CC BY license

(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Abstract— This paper explores the very recent transition of English language teaching at secondary level in Bangladesh. Bangladesh adopted Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) to implement it from primary to higher secondary level. However, while implementing learner-centred curriculum, a mixed attitude was observed among learners, teachers, guardians, educational thinkers, and administrators. For this, the present study aims to investigate the classroom experiences of the English teachers and also to evaluate the findings objectively and recommend effective ways to develop communicative competence of the learners at the secondary level. The study employed quantitative research method and the sample was 10 English teachers. The data is analysed through Likerts' scale and the major findings show that teachers face several difficulties during the CBC implementation. They do not deny the learner-centred curriculum but they frankly expressed the limitations of resources, need for training and administrative support. The study recommends that there should be proper administrative support, regular monitoring and teachers' training in order to develop communicative competence of the learners. There should be proper utilization of digital tools in English language classroom at secondary level.



Keywords— Competency-Based Curriculum, English Language Teaching, Bangladesh, Communicative Competence, Teacher Training

I. INTRODUCTION

A relatively recent shift at primary and secondary level from the traditional content-based curriculum to a Competency Based Curriculum (CBC). (Rahman et al., 2021). This curriculum was a program to enable communicative competence, critical thinking and intercultural awareness in learners. National Curriculum Framework stated that the curriculum was less prescriptive, more learner-centered and participatory. It also adhered to a certain inclusive approach towards English language learning (NCF). Additionally, it sets out to help learners apply English for their real-life scenarios such as academic and creative purposes. It also seeks to foster democratic values in communicative practices.

That new curriculum was rescinded in mid-2024 and reverted back to the old one in 2025. While applying the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC), there was an

attitude partly positive and negative among learners, teachers, guardians as well as educational thinkers and administrators alike. Though the curriculum does not exist anymore in the context of Bangladesh, the researcher feels the necessity to evaluate that curriculum as the strengths and weaknesses of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) will help make the present curriculum more effective.

During implementation at the grassroots level particularly in secondary schools, the pros and cons remain unexplored. At the field level, teachers' experiences, reality, and challenges are not explored. The problems like weak teacher preparation, lack of resources and inflexible assessment systems have again been highlighted by studies that still affect the proper implementation of Competency Based Curriculum in Bangladesh EFL context (Dündar et al., 2019; Brown, 1995). In addition, socio-economic

diversity and rural-urban disparities are also present in semi urban areas like Mymensingh. In circumstances like this it is essential to explore how the elicited translation of the curriculum into actual classroom practices. It is also necessary to explore how the journey of teaching and learning becomes effective from early level.

To get the answer to why this curriculum is withdrawn, the researcher felt the necessity of investigating teachers' perceptions who are important stakeholders. The success or failure of the CBC largely depends on teachers, who are the primary agents of curriculum delivery and classroom practice (Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008).

Competency-based education was a shift from traditional lecture-based instruction to an outcome-based approach. It intended to ensure learner's English language proficiency through active demonstration of their skills, knowledge, values, and attitudes. Relevant research, newspaper reports show that teachers, students, and guardians have mixed approach towards the new curriculum. It has innovative ideas to be implemented like assignments, projects, and innovative activities. However, after 7 months of its launch, it was abandoned by the interim government. The present research will shed light on both the strengths and weaknesses of Competency-Based Curriculum objectively through teachers' perspectives. Thus, the study is directly relevant to the secondary education system of Bangladesh.

However, the research takes place in Mymensingh region only and the participants are all from urban areas. It is a major limitation of study. The sample sizes are also limited because many teachers have reservations with Competency-Based Curriculum, and they were not comfortable with this to talk to. However, the researcher focuses on the qualitative aspect of the study which focuses on the in-depth interviews with teachers.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

As the teachers' perceptions are very crucial for the implementation of CBC, the study aims:

- i. to investigate the classroom experiences of the English teachers at the secondary level during CBC
- ii. to evaluate the findings objectively and recommend effective ways to develop communicative competence of the learners

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The curriculum reform is very crucial to solve the problems of classrooms and also to ensure effective

teaching and learning. Internationally, the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) is acknowledged as a learner-centered approach that prepares learners with real-life skills along with critical thinking and independent learning (Richards, 2006). Its introduction in English education was considered to be a significant when it came into forefront enabled Engendering policy and practices that moves the country's traditional discriminatory rote-learning, grammar-translation approach towards shifts communicative competence with critical awareness of oneself, others as well their culture (NCTB. 2023).

ELT experts in Bangladesh (including Rahman & Akter, 2023; Chowdhury, 2023) claim that CBC fills some important omissions within the old curriculum. It prioritizes communication skills rather than rote memorization, in line with ELT worldwide. Second, it incorporates practical actions in daily life, democracy and self-expression through application — things that completely lacked from the former curriculum. Thirdly, it urges the of existing exam-centered pedagogy through student-center, project based and task centered approaches.

The teachers are the primary implementers and that is why understanding teachers' perceptions is essential for evaluating its effectiveness. Teachers have overall ambiguous attitude toward CBC in Bangladesh. Islam et al. (2023) found that secondary school teachers are generally positive about the potential of the curriculum in terms of student engagement, creativity and learning through practical experience. While recognizing the promise of curriculum, many teachers raised alarm bells about implementation in crowded classrooms and lack sufficient resources or institutional preparedness. The study was conducted with 32 teachers from govt. and non-govt. secondary schools. They used purposive sampling and the data were analyzed thematically. The results show that teachers expressed optimism regarding CBC and at the same time expressed substantial apprehensions regarding education system, the training system, teacher preparedness, and the assessment process.

However, according to a more recent set of studies, Bangladeshi teachers have an ambivalent view concerning the CBC. For instance, Islam et al. Findings from a study of secondary school teachers about the curriculum indicated positive attitudes toward its potential to improve student engagement, creativity and real-world skills (Education Endowment Foundation [in press], Smith etc. al 2025). They liked the activity based learning and ability to link knowledge with real life situations. Yet in spite of that optimism, the majority of teachers raised issues with implementation challenges: poorly trained

educators; not enough materials or academic support for students; and lack institutional preparation.

Likewise, the research conducted by Oluoch, 2020; Shrestha, 2019) in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia revealed both positivity as well as negativity of teachers towards CBC albeit expressing their fear regarding poor training opportunities or resources during assessment. In Kenya, teachers perceived a number of gaps in professional development and administrative supports yet were somewhat positively disposed to the CBC (Waweru & Orodho, 2013).

Since the curriculum itself is ostensibly adequate, empirical studies have indicated an enduring chasm between overarching frameworks and classroom dynamics almost everywhere in rural & semi-urban areas like Mymensingh. Chowdhury (2023) reports secondary teachers of English having issues incorporating communicative tasks into large classes, limited access to authentic materials and the rigidity of examination policies emphasizing memorization over critical engagement.

Additionally, students in rural areas such as Mymensingh have been found to be demotivated because of the lack of exposure regarding English outside classroom settings and ethnic cultural (local), understanding that translates into their external interactions either at a community or home level; reading low articles about how elite people use foreign language refers. Islam 2023. The case of socio-cultural considerations further complicates the implementation of a CBC that calls for learners to be critical, creative and autonomous.

However, this contrasts with the research gap in localized studies of teacher perceptions about CBC at secondary level across various regions of Bangladesh including Mymensingh. The majority of the related literature is oriented around national-level analyses or primary education and largely misses out on key contextual challenges/needs that are present at secondary (Islam et al., 2022). In addition, limited knowledge exists on how teachers in rural and semi-urban contexts understand the relevance of CBCs as well their feasibility and effects on teaching practices or student outcomes.

The teachers' associations claimed that the CBC was foisted upon them with haste and counter-productive goals without adequate preparation, there were confusions in school levels. Examination boards might have taken a little while to align their assessment methods leading

inconsistent results between what they are teaching and how it is being examined. In the rural schools life was even more difficult due to lack of access to ICT, overcrowded classes and untrained teachers rendered CBC almost impossible. The study exposes that the CBC though theoretically strong, there are considerable challenges in those secondary schools of Mymensingh towards implementation at classroom level.

This study aims to contribute the limited empirical Evidence of Mymensingh and secondary education sector by examining teachers perceptions regarding CBC in this context. A study of the experiences, challenges and needs of secondary-level teachers in Mymensingh will give a deeper understanding to the subject matter, thereby feeding into discussions on curriculum reform for Bangladesh.

III. METHODOLOGY

Method

The study adopted quantitative research design to investigate the perceptions of the teachers at secondary level. Quantitative data are collected through FGD and research questionnaire.

Sample

The researcher followed purposive random sampling to select ten English teachers from three government schools and two non-government schools. The study conducted a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with those ten teachers. The names of the schools are not mentioned for the ethical issues and privacy; however, the researcher will provide the necessary details on demand. The participants are selected randomly with their ethical consent to participate in this research.

Instrument

The survey questionnaire focuses on teachers understanding of CBC, classroom practices and activities, perceived strengths and limitations of the CBC and the challenges faced in resource use, assessment, and student engagement.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data is analyzed through pie and bar charts whereas, the open-ended responses are analysed through thematic discussion based on the commonness of the findings. (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Structured questionnaire is analyzed with Likert-scale items.

IV. RESULTS

4.1 Findings of the Questionnaire

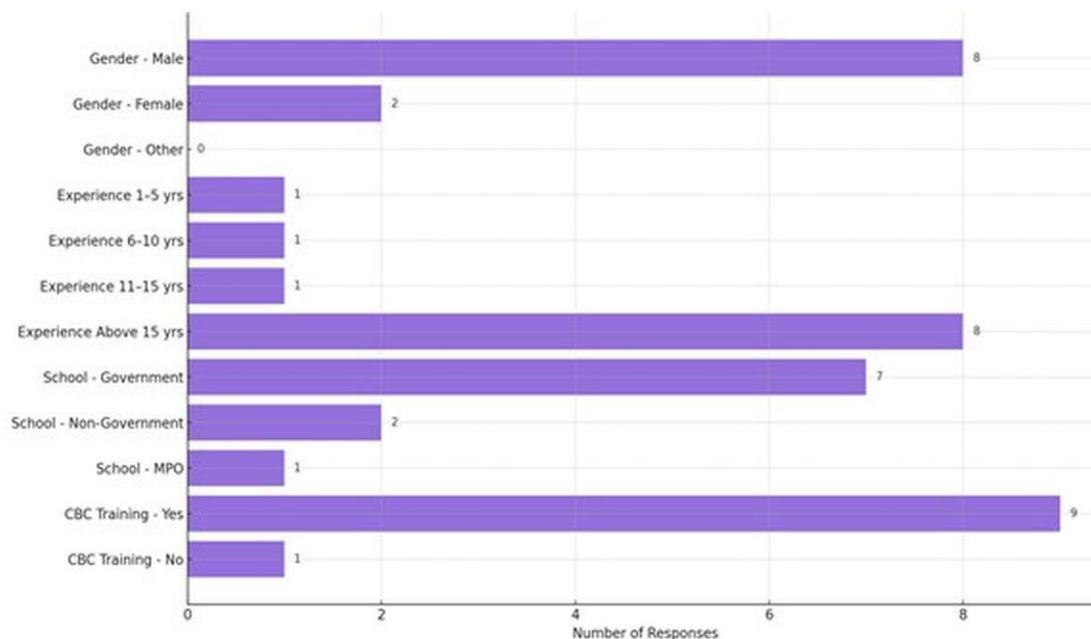


Fig.1:

Demographic information of the respondents

Male teachers (8) confine the sample of this study. This illustrates a gender imbalance in the teaching staff at this field of study. And perhaps, it follows the general case of rural or semi-urban schools around Bangladesh. Furthermore, more than 80% of the teachers had been teaching for over 15 years. This means many are seniors and subject to a plethora of curriculum changes. What they've had for a long time may simply colour their perceptions of the 'new' curricula, and have them tailor it as such. The chart further indicates that the majority of teachers are trained for work in a couple schools (government). This follows a national policy under which new curriculum and training has been provided to government schools first.

Approximately nine out of 10 (90%) report that they have been trained on CBC. This is a hopeful sign as

far as the successful rollout of them, indicating that teachers were most likely adequately equipped with foundational knowledge to deliver competency-based instruction. However, the employment of even one untrained teacher exemplifies why professional development must be universal and holistic.

Hence, the demographic profile reveals that teachers are well experienced male majority cohort, largely from government institutions and trained in CBC. This creates an opportunity for the researcher to ensure what problems have been found while implementing competency-based reforms in Mymensingh region. Notably, an additional policy focus is needed on gender balance and the inclusion of all institutional types and categories of staff in training programmes.

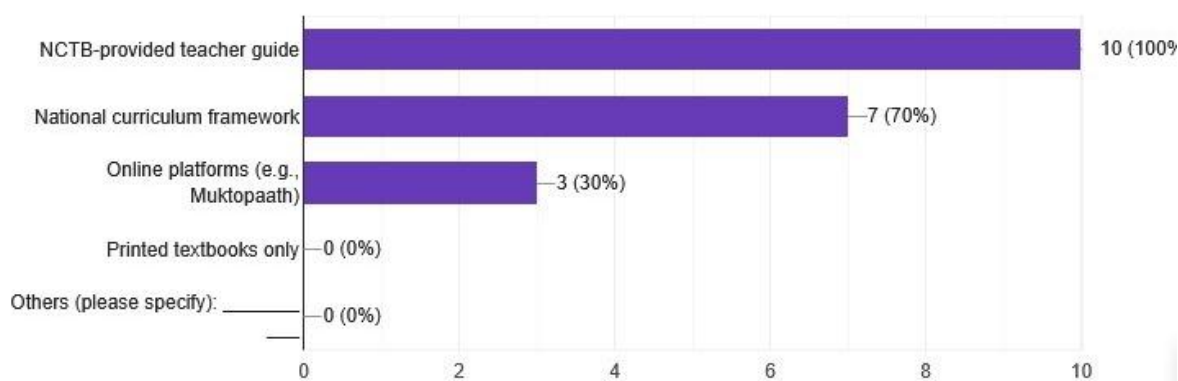


Fig.2: Which document/resource did you use most to plan CBC-based lessons? (You can select more than one)

The above figure shows the answers from teachers on which document/resource they utilise for planning CBC-based lessons (with multiple responses possible). They had the choice of using multiple category

Teachers' Guide Provided by NCTB: All the respondents (100%) said they depended on teacher guide provided by National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) while preparing their lessons of Competency-Based Curriculum CBC. Such finding indicates the central and authoritative role of NCTB guide most secondary teachers set lesson planning in time new curriculum implementation. Once again, they saw the NCTB guide to be reasonably structured, widely accessible or most in line with their ideas of what was expected from a CBC (NC) (7 responses — 70%) noted overwhelmingly as used for National Curriculum Framework. Hence, it indicates that teachers are not only working through scripted curriculum guides but also pulling from larger-scale policy and pedagogical guidelines to inform their teaching. Teachers were moderately engaged with curriculum theory and planning principles, indicating their awareness of aligning teaching objectives with national education policy.

Online Media (e.g. Muktopaath) (3 responses — 30%): Only about a third of teachers reported using any

form of digital or online platform like Muktopaath. This relatively lower percent may reflect limited digital integration, lagging professional development or gatekeeping to access technology-based resources in some schools. And then there are teachers who may be more interested in traditional print-based/official resources rather than online content.

Printed Textbooks Only (0 responses – 0%): N/A — No one chose “printed textbooks only” as resource. This finding suggests that textbooks are not seen as adequate, nor independent for lesson planning based on the CBC. And it reinforces the role of supplementary materials (guides/frameworks) in CBC implementation as well.

None of the participants selected “Others” giving us confidence that, for these respondents at least, key resources are confined to official curriculum documents and established online platforms.

Findings presented here indicate that teachers in the Mymensingh secondary education context depended on NCTB documents, especially teacher guide and national curriculum framework when implementing CBC. However, less engagement with online platforms and not solely relying on textbooks suggest the need for deeper digital inclusion in addition to broader training.

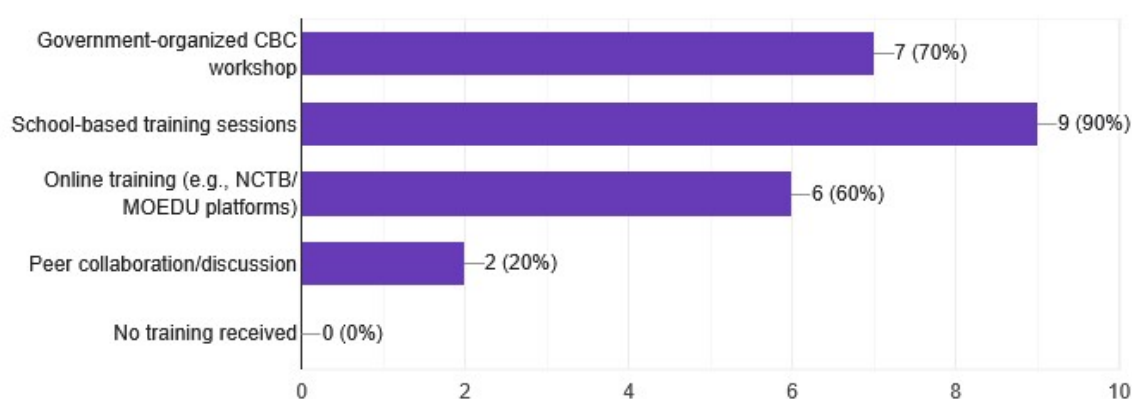


Fig.3: What type of training have you received regarding the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC)? You can select more than one)

In figure 3, the cumulative frequencies (counts N = 10) exceed total participants simply because respondents selected more than one option. 70% were reported as participants of government authority workshops (7). These workshops usually train teachers for a standardized understanding of the reforms and provide them with official guidelines and resources. The implication of their widely spread uptake is that they are quite well-disseminated at the policy level.

Nine out of ten (90%) reports this as the most prevalent training modality. Such a high percentage

indicates the importance of school-level initiatives as plays an important role in preparing teachers for CBC implementation. School-based training usually includes in-house workshops, ongoing professional development sessions and hands-on demonstrations relevant to that particular school setting.

60% of the people (6 respondents) are involved in online training. This indicates an increasing dependence on digitally supplemented National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) MHPE for other subject books from the Ministry of Education (MOEDU). For teachers who live in

an area far from their state, online training is a great option as it allows for easy accessibility. 2 (20%) identification on-the-job or informal training through interaction with fellow workers and discussions. Less common is this mode, which emphasizes the impact of collegial support networks in connecting people and sharing practices to address issues during curriculum shifting processes. Of the sample, 0 respondents (0%) reported no training suggesting that all participants had experienced exposure to at least one facet of professional development regarding CBC.

The data show that a number of teachers in the study received more than one type of training, and many had exposure to school-based sessions as well as workshops run by government agencies. Combining these online training centers and peer support is also a comprehensive measure that an individual can take for their vocational growth. The broad range of this training landscape undoubtedly plays a role in positively influencing levels of preparedness and confidence for teachers implementing the Competency-Based Curriculum in secondary schools.

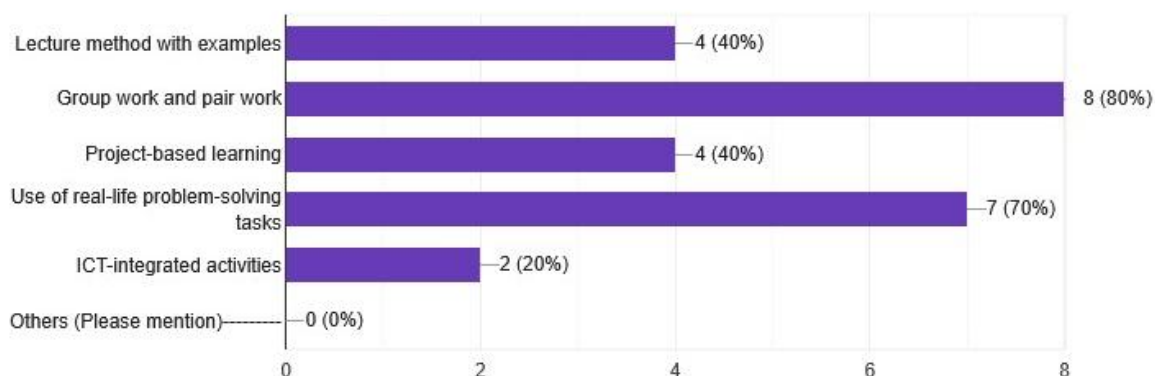


Fig.4: What teaching method did you mostly use in your CBC-based classroom? (You can select more than one)

Figure 4 shows the teaching methods used by secondary-level teachers based on ten responses under the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC). Perhaps the most common (80%) and least innovative form is group/pair work, which fits naturally to CBC's learner-centered pedagogy valuing collaboration/engagement of student. Thirdly, 70 percent of teachers were reported to give their learners tasks that involve solving real-life problems – this is important in terms of learning being contextualized and linked back to CBC which encourages application of what has been learned.

While 40% of respondents use an interactive method based on lecture with examples, the prevalence there shows that traditional practices are still in play (probably due to space limitations or simply being taught a certain practice) and not all instructors have experience

teaching differently. Similar uptake (40%) is seen for project-based learning too, which may be closely linked to time constraints or lack of assessment integration; the latter being a major argument against its use. Only 20% reported incorporating ICT-embedded activities, revealing an important gap in digital pedagogy that could stem from infrastructure and training limitations. Free-text responses under the 'Others' option were lacking, suggesting that teachers simply operate within known modes of practice (though it may also suggest a lack of experimentation or institutional encouragement around diverse strategies). Thus, promising as it is the current uptake of CBC-aligned approaches also reflects a legacy reliance on traditional methods and challenges to effective digital integration showing that further professional development resourcing continues to be necessary for successful implementation.

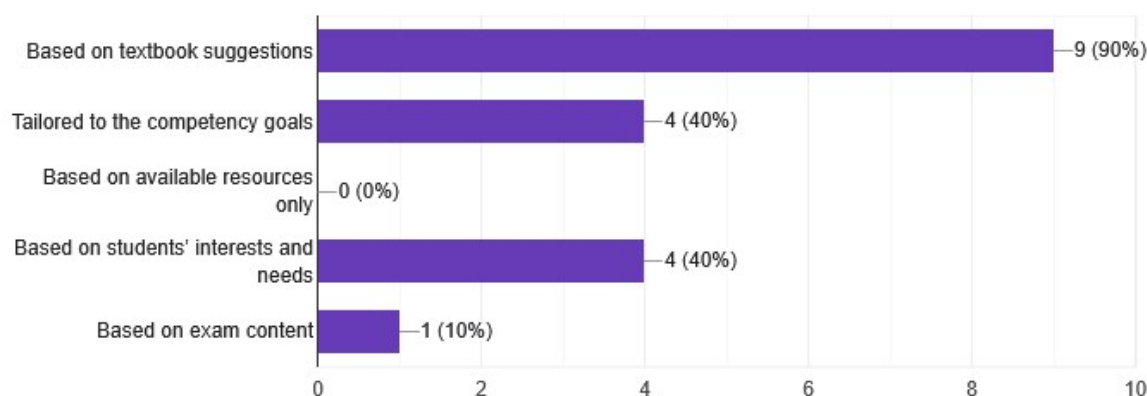


Fig.5: How did you usually select learning activities for your students under CBC? (You can select more than one)

Figure 5 shows how teachers responded to the learning activity selection criteria for students based on the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) model. A staggering majority (90%) reported reliance on textbook-led recommendations, which suggests a formulaic lesson plan preparation or possibly dependence of teachers upon textbooks. Relying on such content may promise continuity but presupposes little pedagogical flexibility or creativity in activity development.

A worrisome focus on past leading to questionable curriculum interpretation and implementation, 40% of teachers reported the following questions "To what extent have you purposefully chosen activities that align with a competency objective? Likewise, the same proportion was noted for learners' interests and unique learning needs are taken into account to suggest that attention is at least partially paid to learner

centered differentiation, which CBC fundamentally embodies. Notably, none of the respondents based their learning task selection solely on compliance with available resources; this implies that logistical constraints are perhaps not a main factor—or else materials can be assumed to be rather standardized or good enough. Further, only one (10%) of teachers engaging in activities related to the content from tests indicated that these lessons were driven by an assessment — another measure of minimal instruction based on assessments within the CBC context.

Therefore, the data imply that although CBC promotes outcome-based and learner-centred teaching, classroom practice is primarily textbook driven. It clearly points out the void from where CBC turned into a tough nut for making life miserable to teachers.

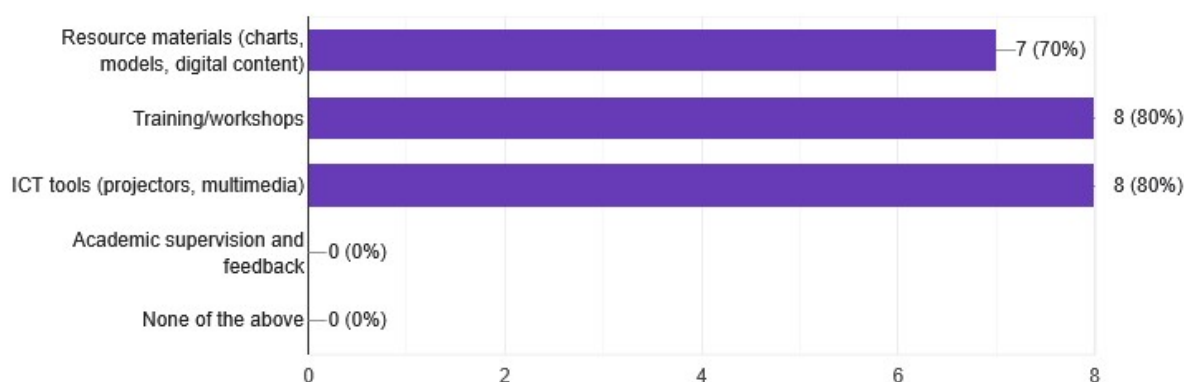


Fig.6: What kind of support did your school provide for implementing CBC? (You can select more than one)

The forms of institutional support received by teachers in implementing the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) are shown figure 6. The ten responses included one — which gave an achingly familiar sound to

so many of the professional development sessions I led as a teacher at various schools before giving teachers access to technology tools such as multimedia or projectors. This shows a good effort by schools to equip teachers with

basic competencies for effective delivery in CBC classrooms.

Of the 70% that reported access to learning aids, all were being provided instruction with something such as charts or digital content—showing investments in supplemental teaching support through materials. However, the absence of academic mentorship/formative evaluation is glaring; no participant reported having a supervisor. This gap reflects a fundamental failure of the

structure; while assistance in terms of material and training is positioned effectively, measures for pedagogical monitoring and feedback remain unmonitored.

Thus, overall the support relating to infrastructure and training seems relatively well grounded however academic scaffolding is absent which may ultimately limit long term induction or professional development in staying true to the curriculum.

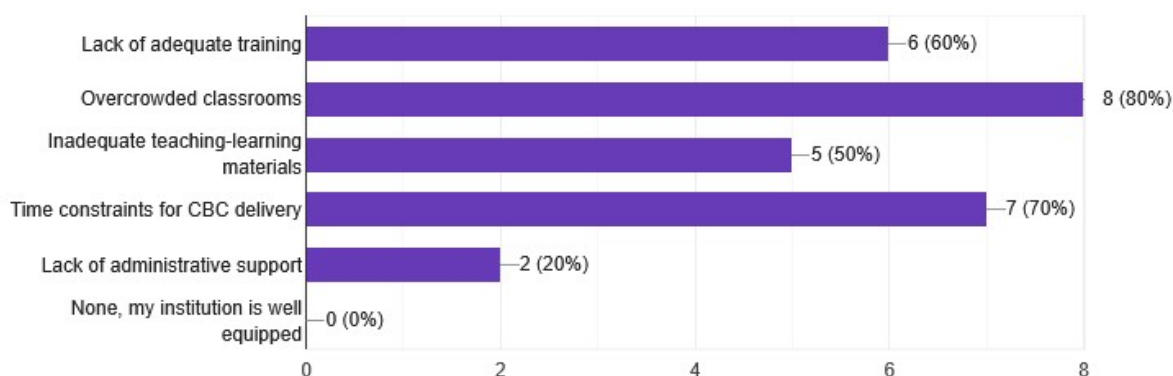


Fig.7: What was the most significant limitation in your school for CBC implementation? (You can select more than one)

It summarizes the main institutional obstacles teachers see when it comes to implementing the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). Eighty percent of respondents rated large class sizes as one of their top three challenges, and they say teaching in these settings makes interactive or differentiated instruction difficult. A further 70% noted, time pressure arguing components of the curriculum cannot always be delivered within scheduled timescales without compromising on quality.

Sixty percent said there was no systematic preparation, exposing gaps in continuous professional development that cannot meet the demands of CBC. Moreover, 54% of teachers pointed to a lack of

instructional materials as an obstacle meaning that they are lacking the required material resources for participatory learning. Elsewhere, just 20% cited managerial ineffectiveness when they may mean that administrative support is limited, passive (at best) in tackling implementation challenges.

More tellingly, none of the participants believed that their schools were properly prepared to implement CBC, pointing to deeper systemic inadequacies in relation to CBC readiness. In sum, these findings underscore that structural and logistical challenges—as opposed to conceptual resistance—continue to be the major impediments in applied practice.

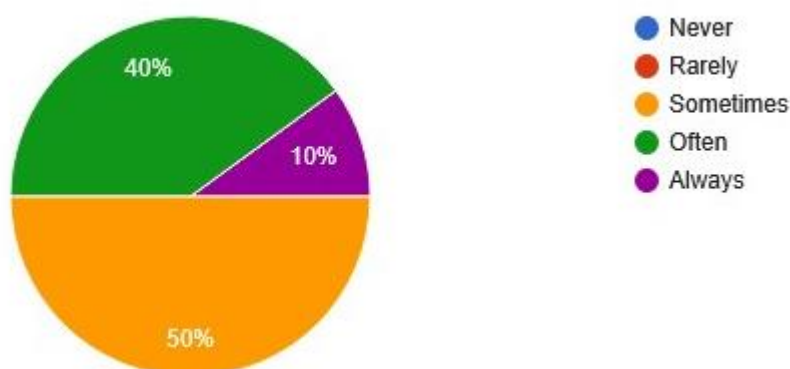


Fig.8: How often do you use communicative activities in your English class? (Rate on a scale: 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5=Always)

Based on the answer of 10 teachers pie chart eight shows how often English is used for classroom interaction in English lessons. This trend toward target language use was underscored by the dominant 70 percent who reported that they often used English. Furthermore, 20% assert they always employ English, a sign of dedication to establishing a permeable language atmosphere. And a mere 10 percent replied that they use English sometimes, while no student selected “rarely” or “never,” signaling an overall consciousness of the didactic value in furthering mastery through frequencies with which we generally deploy it.

This distributive knowing and doing suggest that the majority of teachers identify English form a principle mode for classroom communication, which is necessary communicative competence. But that only a fifth manage to use English at all times over this period may rather expose practical barriers such as learners' limited proficiency, classroom management issues or contextual restrictions in large or rural schools. Most importantly, the data suggests progress in a positive direction although certainly there is still scope for reinforcing consistency and making more of language exposure across all teaching situations.

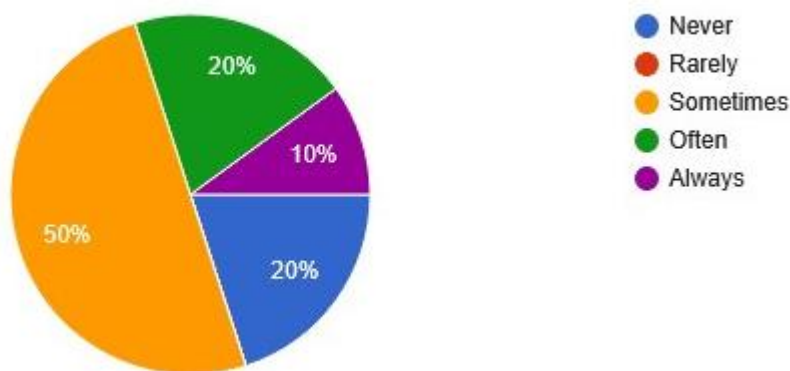


Fig.9: How often do you use Group or pair work in your English class? (Rate on a scale: 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5=Always)

The figure 9 shown the rate of English classes that reflect teachers about group or pair work. Moderate implementation levels were indicated by the fact that half of respondents (50%) reported sometimes using collaborative techniques. During that time, 20 % said they often used group or pair work and 10% claimed they always did; these are by far the minority amongst staff who regularly use learner-centered strategies.

Despite the fact that CBC emphasises interaction and communication through group activities, a significant 20% of respondents claim never to use group or pair work. There are many reasons why one may be hesitant such as

large class sizes, limited time or lack of training to implement cooperative tasks in a fruitful way.

Most importantly, despite the limited use of interactive learning formats some evidence of it can be found but more concerning is that this absence often illustrates a disconnect between what curricula communicates and actual classroom practice. Improving teacher capacity, offering classroom management support and reconfiguring class environments could facilitate more consistent use of student-centered collaborative learning methods.

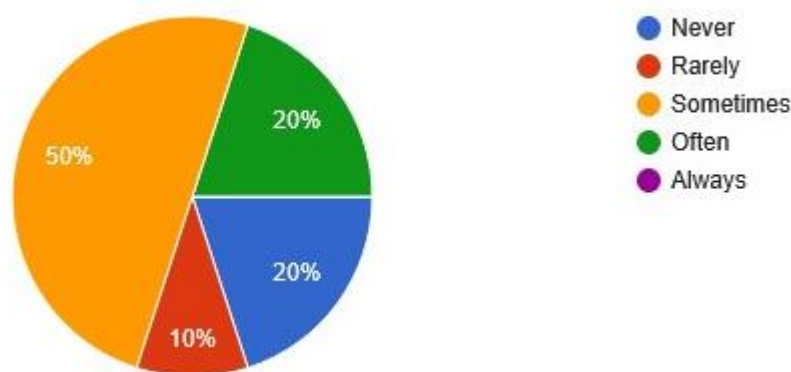


Fig.10: How often do you use formative assessment tools (Quiz, question-answer, assignments, projects) in your English class? (Rate on a scale: 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5=Always)

Based on data collected in October 2023, the figure 10 shows how often formative assessment strategies (for example, quizzes /Q&A/ assignments and project work) are used in English classroom. Half of the 10 teachers who responded use them frequently, indicating some mid-level inclusion of informal assessment strategies. 10% say this and 20 apply them often, another 20 don't use them at all.

Such utilisation display sporadic application of formative tools, despite these being pivotal to ongoing feedback and monitoring learning progress. The small percentage of regular users reflects a rift between assessment policy and instructional practice that may be

attributable to time constraints, limited training opportunities, or reliance on summative evaluation approaches.

The findings suggest supporting increased awareness and means to incorporate authentic, low-stakes forms of evaluation at all times in the classroom for reflective learning and skill building. Those whose work involved reviewing and/or writing practice tests strongly endorsed: strengthening institutional guidance and resources; offering targeted professional development as practices could be identified by area such as formative assessments, national examinations or other psychometric tools.

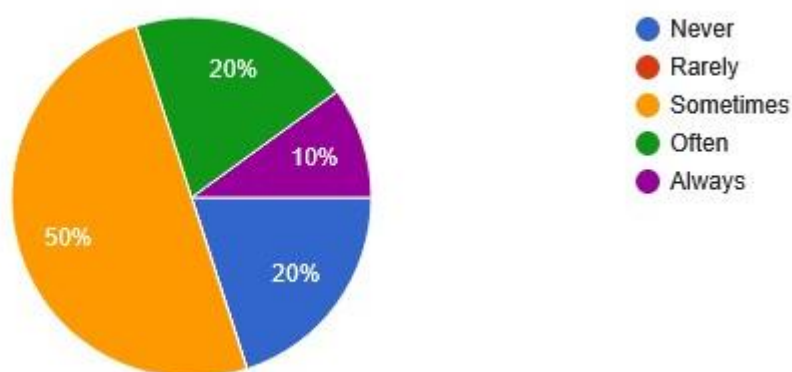


Fig.11: During class, I found the students more active than traditional classroom pattern

In figure 11, we see what respondents are observing in terms of student engagement with the current instructional model versus regular methods. Most (60%) said this meant learners were more engaged, indicating that those taking part felt the classroom atmosphere had improved. Twenty percent of respondents indicated that

they strongly believed this perspective, further solidifying theoretically the idea (Hinton, 2003) suggested by prior research that the new pedagogical structure promotes greater engagement. Another 20% said they were neutral, meaning that either the learners did not behave consistently or the respondents could be hesitant to say

anything definitively about what was observed. To my surprise, there are no negative responses which means we do share the same basic impressions of improved interactivity. These findings suggest a tentative movement towards more responsive and participatory learning environments, although the ubiquitous positivity may

indicate only subjective expectations or institutional congruence with contemporary curriculum reform. Thus, it appears the data (particularly for learner behavior) is promising but deeper analysis needs to be done into contextual adherences.

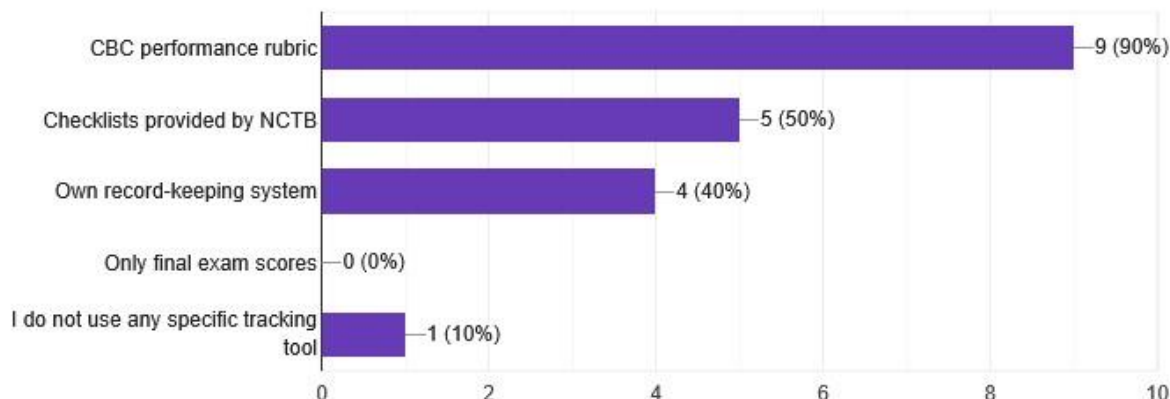


Fig.12: What tools did you use to track student progress in CBC? (Tick all that apply)

The figure shows the different tools utilized by teachers to assess students within a Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) system. The CBC performance rubric was the most commonly used tool, with 90% of respondents reporting its use (n=10). This suggests a close fit with the formal evaluation components built into the CBC model of learning. Other respondents mentioned checklists given by the (NCTB) National Curriculum and Textbook Board facilitating formative evaluation while scoring (i.e. 50%) half of them did so respectively, indicating institutional support for their practice in this regard among those comprehensive practices); Additionally, 40% of teachers indicated using their own recordings, which implies an element of personalization or contextualization in assessment practices. None of the respondents, again using only students' final exam scores as tracking method means extreme deviation from traditional summative evaluation. The only response without any dedicated tracking tool (10%) is not surprising, especially given that a built structure of monitoring techniques in accordance with the CBC philosophy has been implemented widespread. Taken together, these results reflect a broader move to widespread regular use of formative assessment methods in secondary schools.

4.2 Discussion of the findings

A shift in subject teaching — more group and problem-solving work, consistent with the student-centred approach of the CBC. This augurs well as Vygotsky (1978) suggested social interaction plays an integral role in

learning. Yet, traditional strategies such as lectures are clearly not wholly gone— a finding typical in transitional education systems. The other big issue is teachers follow the textbook instead of ensuring that activities closely align with what students know. That show the difference between classroom learning and curriculum oriented. As described by Richards (2013), it is also hard for teachers to convert curriculum aims into actual lessons.

It seems like that institutional support is somewhat doing its job. While training and materials are available, the absence of academic oversight or mentorship is a significant barrier. Evidence suggests that ongoing support and feedback are critical for long-lasting teacher growth (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

The results also indicate that English is perhaps being used for the right reasons in classrooms, which bodes well for communicative competence. However, the mere absence of group work and formative assessment implies that CBC principles are not effectively being implemented. Formative assessment is essential for optimal student learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998), but it seldom found here.

Finally, it is promising to see more students getting involved. It suggests that CBC can potentially create more interesting classrooms (but not necessarily, depending on context and how it is taught).

V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, a few practical steps can be suggested:

- i. Teachers are not given enough opportunities to create competency-based activities instead of just implementing guides.
- ii. Schools should not only offer workshops, but they need to put in regular mentoring and classroom observation.
- iii. And that there needs to be much more support for digital tools and platforms, particularly when it comes to rural communities.
- iv. Teachers should be discouraged from relying on textbooks, and instead place more emphasis on learning outcomes and student needs.
- v. An imbalance of formative assessment practices-A strong common thread among all the suggestions provided for critiquing summative assessments is a bias toward formative assessments-however be strong they did (read out more about this in ILR). The implications here are many but primarily revolve around simple strategies teachers can deploy on any given day.
- vi. Encouraging pair/group work is challenged by, but perhaps supported with smaller class sizes or support in larger classes.

This study investigated how teachers are implementing the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) in secondary English classrooms. More broadly, the findings are a mixed bag. One side is things are looking positive. Most teachers are well trained and experienced but trying to follow CBC principles (teamwork, real life tasks etc., increasing the use of English in class). This is also a positive sign that the students are getting more involved, which suggests student-based learning might be making some big strides.

The study also highlights some gaps, however. That notwithstanding, teachers still follow textbook prescriptions and rely heavily on the NCTB teacher guide rather than fully understand it from a competency-based perspective. Digital tools are minimal and a lot of the classes still follow lecture techniques. Moreover, modalities such as formative assessment and ongoing group work are not practised uniformly. Also, the absence of academic mentoring and supervision adds to teachers' troubles in making a switch over.

Hence CBC implementation started off well enough, but has yet to be fully effective at the practice level. The gap between policy and the reality of a classroom still exists. Gradual support, more training on

classroom implementation strategies with teachers can eventually help them meet these needs and make CBC relevant to students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Declarations on AI

The authors declare that generative AI and AI-assisted technologies were not used in any way to prepare or write this manuscript. However, for simple grammar checks, AI is used.

Informed Consent

Informed consent to participate in the study has been obtained from participants and respective teachers.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ball, S. J. (2008). *The education debate*. Policy Press. (No DOI available)
- [2] Biesta, G. (2015). *Good education in an age of measurement: Ethics, politics, democracy*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315761085>
- [3] Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998). Assessment and classroom learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 5(1), 7–74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0969595980050102>
- [4] Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4), 589–597. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806>
- [5] Brown, H. D. (1995). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (3rd ed.). Prentice Hall. (No DOI available)
- [6] Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2019). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices* (3rd ed.). Pearson. (No DOI available)
- [7] Chisholm, L., & Leyendecker, R. (2008). Curriculum reform in post-1990s sub-Saharan Africa. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 28(2), 195–205. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2007.04.003>
- [8] Chowdhury, R. (2023). English language teaching reforms in Bangladesh: Challenges and prospects. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 14(2), 45–58. (No DOI available / verify source)
- [9] Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective teacher professional development*. Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/122.311>
- [10] Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2011). *Teaching and researching motivation* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315833751>
- [11] Dündar, E., & Merç, A. (2019). Teachers' perspectives on competency-based language teaching. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 15(1), 1–15. (No DOI available)
- [12] Fullan, M. (2007). *The new meaning of educational change* (4th ed.). Teachers College Press. (No DOI available)

- [13] Gulikers, J. T. M., Bastiaens, T. J., & Kirschner, P. A. (2004). A five-dimensional framework for authentic assessment. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 52(3), 67–86. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02504676>
- [14] Islam, M. S. (2023). Challenges of English language learning in rural Bangladesh. *Asian EFL Journal*, 27(3), 112–130. (No DOI available / journal-dependent)
- [15] Islam, M. S., & Al-Amin, M. (2021). Classroom challenges in large EFL classes in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Instruction*, 14(2), 255–270. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2021.14215a>
- [16] Islam, S., Rahman, A., Paul, U. C., & Khaleduzzaman, M. (2025). Teachers' perceptions of competency-based curriculum implementation at the secondary level in Bangladesh. *Oxford Review of Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2025.2470816>
- [17] Islam, M. S., et al. (2022). Curriculum reform in Bangladesh: A review of recent developments. *Bangladesh Education Journal*, 21(1), 33–50. (No DOI available / verify source)
- [18] Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511815355>
- [19] Nation, I. S. P., & Macalister, J. (2010). *Language curriculum design*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203870731>
- [20] National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB). (2023). *National curriculum framework 2021 implementation guidelines*. Government of Bangladesh. (No DOI available)
- [21] Oluoch, G. P. (2020). Curriculum reforms in Africa: Competency-based approaches. *African Educational Research Journal*, 8(2), 45–53. (No DOI available)
- [22] Priestley, M., & Biesta, G. (2013). *Reinventing the curriculum: New trends in curriculum policy and practice*. Bloomsbury. (No DOI available)
- [23] Priestley, M., & Philippou, S. (2021). Curriculum making as social practice. *The Curriculum Journal*, 32(2), 123–136. <https://doi.org/10.1002/curj.85>
- [24] Priestley, M., Biesta, G., & Robinson, S. (2015). *Teacher agency: An ecological approach*. Bloomsbury. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781472593598>
- [25] Rahman, M., & Akter, S. (2023). Competency-based English curriculum in Bangladesh: A critical review. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 14(1), 78–90. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1401.09>
- [26] Rahman, M., et al. (2021). Curriculum reforms in Bangladesh: Shifting paradigms in English education. *Journal of Asian Education*, 12(2), 101–115. (No DOI available / verify source)
- [27] Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today*. Cambridge University Press. (No DOI available)
- [28] Savignon, S. J. (2018). *Communicative competence*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315174120>
- [29] Schiro, M. (2013). *Curriculum theory: Conflicting visions and enduring concerns* (2nd ed.). SAGE. (No DOI available)
- [30] Shrestha, P. N. (2019). Competency-based curriculum in South Asia. *Journal of Education Policy*, 34(5), 567–582. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2018.1462210>
- [31] Tikly, L. (2010). Towards a framework for understanding the quality of education. *Comparative Education*, 47(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050068.2011.541671>
- [32] UNESCO. (2015). *Rethinking education: Towards a global common good?* UNESCO Publishing. (No DOI available)
- [33] Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press. (No DOI available)
- [34] Waweru, P. N., & Orodho, J. A. (2013). Management practices and implementation of competency-based curriculum in Kenya. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 1(5), 1–10. (No DOI available)